

THE LAST WORD ON WHO SHOT JFK

**Closing the book
on the crime of
the century**

BY TONY SCADUTO

A quarter century has passed since John F. Kennedy had his head blown apart in Dallas. But the question of who killed him is still very much alive. Was it the Soviet KGB? Fidel Castro's hit men? Anti-Castro Cubans incensed that Kennedy had cancelled plans to help them depose Fidel? Was it the Mafia? Or rogue elements of the CIA?

That those questions just won't go away flows naturally from two solid truths:

- The Warren Commission's findings that Lee Harvey Oswald fired the fatal shot, that he acted alone, and that there was no organized conspiracy to kill the president, was based on lies, distortion, and suppression of evidence. A total whitewash.

- Jack Ruby, who murdered Oswald two days after the JFK assassination, silencing the only man who might have told us the truth, was not merely a small-time go-go joint owner and petty gambler; Jack Ruby was the Chicago Mafia's man in Dallas, and he was involved with some of the biggest Mafia bosses in the country.

It was 30 minutes after noon, a Friday, November 22, 1963. Kennedy and his wife, Jacqueline, were in the rear seat of a limousine, waving at crowds along the route of the Dallas motorcade. In jump seats in front of them sat Texas Governor John Connally and his wife, Nellie. The crowds were cheering, enthusiastic, and just after the limousine passed a large building known as the Texas School Book Depository and entered Dealey Plaza, Nellie Connally turned and said to Kennedy: "Well, Mr. President, you can't say Dallas doesn't love you."

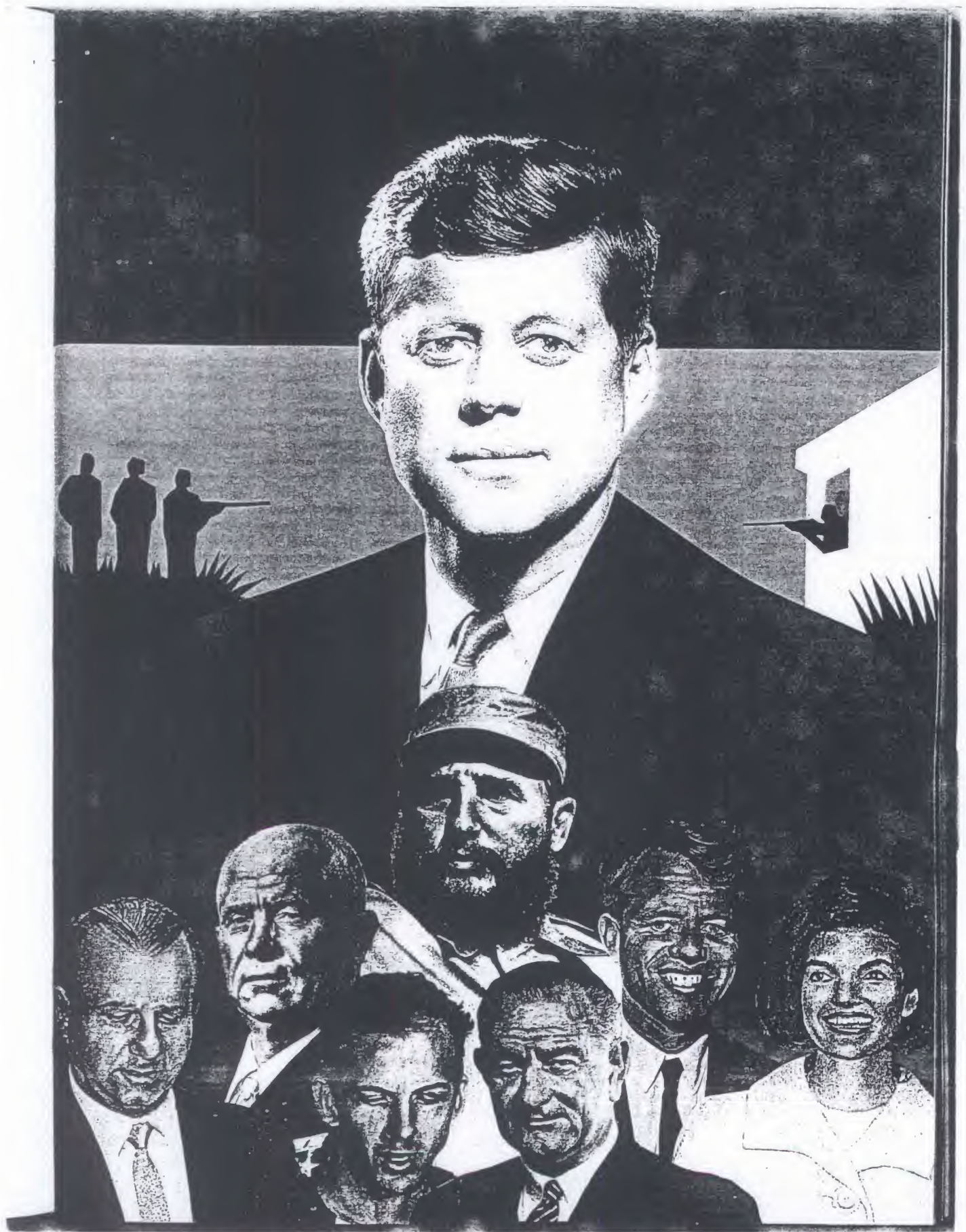
Kennedy didn't have a chance to reply. There was a sharp crack, then two or three more.

Kennedy was pushed forward by a bullet that hit him in the back, Connally slumped over toward his wife when he himself was struck, and then Kennedy's head snapped back and a large chunk of skull and brain matter splattered behind him and to his left. Jackie Kennedy, her dress bloodstained, began crawling over the limo's trunk in an attempt to grab pieces of her husband's skull.

"I was trying to hold his hair on," she later told the Warren Commission. "But from the front, there was nothing. . . ."

Remember that, it's important: one bullet hit Kennedy in the right front of his head and shoved parts of his skull back and to the left, and Jackie remembered being horrified that there was nothing left of the front of his head.

The president was pronounced dead at one P.M. About 45 minutes after he'd been shot, another murder occurred in Dallas, miles from Dealey Plaza. A cop, J.D. Tippit, was shot to death by a man who reportedly fled into a nearby movie house. When other policemen arrived, they bagged Lee Harvey Oswald inside the theater.



Meanwhile, police had found a rifle equipped with a telescopic sight on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository, which overlooked the site of the assassination. According to witnesses, shots had been fired from windows of the Depository just after the motorcade had passed the building—that is, from behind Kennedy's limousine. Police learned that a man who worked in the building, Lee Harvey Oswald, had vanished.

Oswald, a former Marine who had gone to live in the Soviet Union in 1959, had renounced his citizenship and married a Russian woman—whose uncle was a high-ranking official in the KGB—was formally charged with murdering President Kennedy and Officer Tippit.

Oswald, questioned for hours, repeatedly denied having killed anyone, and insisted he was "a patsy" and a fall guy.

Two days after the murders, Oswald was to be transferred from the city jail to the Dallas County jail. Journalists crowded into the basement of the police building housing the city jail to re-

es and examining tens of thousands of pages of reports from the FBI, the CIA, and other federal and state agencies. Its final report, released in September 1964, concluded that the fatal shots came from the Book Depository's sixth-floor windows; that Lee Harvey Oswald fired all the shots; that there was no conspiracy of any kind; that rumors that Oswald worked for the FBI or CIA were false; that Oswald acted alone.

The public bought it, at first. After all, the probity of Earl Warren, future President Gerald Ford, and the other Commission members could not be questioned. But soon there was a small but steady stream of magazine articles and books that tore holes in the Commission's investigation and conclusions. The stream turned into a torrent when startling new material was revealed in suppressed documents that were pried loose under the Freedom of Information Act.

For one thing, records of executive sessions of the Warren Commission showed that its members believed its major function was to dispel all specu-

FBI files. The allegations, Rankin said, were "very damaging for the agencies that are involved in it and it must be wiped out insofar as it is possible to do so," according to minutes of the meeting, which were released years later.

Former CIA Director Allen Dulles, a member of the Commission, quickly noted a major problem: how to investigate the allegation, since Hoover would no doubt deny that Oswald had ever worked for the FBI. Dulles said that if he were in Hoover's shoes, he would lie under oath.

The die was cast. Hoover denied knowing anything about Oswald. He even denied that his agents had tried to debrief Oswald on his return from Russia, which is hardly credible. Before the Commission began its real work, Hoover came in with a report several hundred pages long which presented all the evidence that Oswald acted alone. The Commission followed Hoover's script like marionettes.

To prove Oswald acted alone, the Commission devised the single-bullet theory—what its critics call the "magic bullet"—one of the most absurd conclusions ever found in an official report. Warren's group ruled that Oswald fired three shots in 5.6 seconds, and that one of those rounds killed JFK. It ignored the fact that Oswald was a lousy marksman, according to his Marine records. It ignored the fact that even National Rifle Association sharpshooters had great difficulty firing three rounds from the old rifle Oswald allegedly used—a bolt-action rifle requiring manual ejection of one shell before the next round could be loaded into the chamber—in the few seconds that bullets were fired at Kennedy. And it failed to note the fact that the NRA shooters couldn't hit the target—a stationary target.

Of the three bullets, one hit Kennedy in the head, killing him. Another went wild, hitting a curb and wounding a bystander. The third was the magic bullet. Because of the time problems—three shots in 5.6 seconds—the commission had to invent the theory that this single round struck Kennedy in the back of the neck, exited his throat, hovered in the air for 1.8 seconds, and then made a sharp right turn and flew on toward Gov. Connally, who was sitting directly in front of Kennedy. Next, the bullet entered Connally's back near his right armpit, shattered his fifth rib and then his right wrist, and finally burrowed into his left thigh. One bullet, seven holes.

That magic bullet, the Commission claimed, worked its way out of Connally's body to be discovered, hours

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port the transfer. As Oswald was being led from an elevator to an armored car, Jack Ruby, a Dallas nightclub operator who was friendly with scores of cops, suddenly stepped forward and fired a single shot into Oswald's abdomen; millions of Americans watched Oswald's murder on their TV screens.

Ruby insisted he had killed Oswald because he was temporarily unbalanced by his beloved president's death. He was found guilty at a trial, and sentenced to death. But Ruby didn't live long enough to be electrocuted; he died of cancer in January 1967.

Within days of the murders, the new president, Lyndon Johnson, announced the creation of the Warren Commission, chaired by the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, Earl Warren. Johnson instructed the Commission to investigate everything about the assassination and the murder of Oswald, and he instructed the Commission to get at the truth and report its findings to the American people and the world.

The Commission investigated for ten months, hearing more than 550 witness-

lation that Kennedy was murdered by assassins under the control of either the KGB or Castro. Johnson himself told Earl Warren he was afraid that, should Oswald be found to have been part of a foreign conspiracy, "it could mean nuclear war," according to the report of the Senate Intelligence Committee. And according to Melvin Eisenberg, a Commission lawyer, Johnson ordered a cover-up and the members of the Commission went along because they had the same fears as Johnson.

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover helped orchestrate the whitewash. Hoover had his own fears. Within hours of Oswald's arrest, rumors spread through official Washington and Dallas that he was an agent for the FBI or CIA, or both, and that some Dallas FBI agents had had contact with him in the months before the assassination.

In one of the Commission's first closed-door meetings, its chief counsel, J. Lee Rankin, reported allegations that Oswald had worked for the FBI, collecting \$200 a month as an informer, and was known as Number 179 in Dallas

later, lying on a stretcher at the hospital to which Kennedy and Connally had been rushed.

Not only is it impossible for a bullet to do those kinds of gyrations, ballistics experts say, but most astounding of all is that the slug was found in near-pristine condition. It had lost only 2.5 grams of its weight, or 1.5 percent, after tearing through one man and smashing a rib and wrist bones of a second. The Commission itself had a similar bullet fired into the wrist of a cadaver. That bullet was mangled.

To indict Oswald as the lone killer of JFK, the Commission also had to rule out any possibility of another assassin firing at the motorcade from the front, from what has come to be known as the grassy knoll. That was a grass-covered hill leading up to a fence, covered by shrubbery and trees, that closed off the parking lot for employees who worked in a railroad yard overlooking the street in Dealey Plaza down which the motorcade was proceeding.

At the first crack of the shots, according to FBI and police reports, bystanders shouted to motorcycle cops that a gunman was firing from the top of the grassy knoll. Three cops rushed to the top of the hill.

The witnesses' reports of what they saw at the top of the knoll matched in important details—puffs of smoke as if from a gun, strange men with walkie-talkies in strange cars in the parking lot, and so on. Railroad workers said that after they heard the shots and saw the smoke, they ran over to the area, where they found about a hundred footprints—as if someone had been standing and pacing there for a long time, waiting for the motorcade.

One cop who ran up the knoll with his gun drawn, Joe Smith, came across a man and asked what he was doing there. The man flashed a badge or ID card and "showed me he was a Secret Service agent," Smith told the FBI. There was one problem with that: No Secret Service agents had been assigned to the area. Whoever was using a phony ID was possibly part of a group assigned to murder JFK.

Further evidence that shots were fired from the knoll, establishing that Oswald did not act alone, was found in a home movie made by a bystander, Abraham Zapruder. The film clearly shows Kennedy first being driven forward by a bullet that hits him in the upper back; then his head is forced backward from the force of a bullet hitting him from the front and taking off much of the top of his skull, confirming Jackie Kennedy's statement that "from the front [of his skull] there was nothing."

(To add a bit more gore and sensationalism to a case that has more than its share, the newly released documents revealed that within three years of Kennedy's murder, 17 witnesses—each of whom could have provided evidence pointing to a conspiracy—were murdered or died under mysterious circumstances. The actuarial odds against that happening are about 100 trillion to one.)

All of these revelations and more made it plain that the Warren Commission had crafted a fiction. Even President Johnson, privy to top-secret documents, said after he left office that he didn't believe the Commission's findings. "I never believed that Oswald acted alone," Johnson said in a 1973 interview with *Atlantic* magazine. The doubts were so strong that in 1976 Congress authorized creation of a special committee to investigate the murders of JFK, his brother Robert, and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The House Select Committee on Assassinations, after an inquiry that lasted two and half years and cost \$5.4 million, issued a report in July 1979 that agreed with the Warren Commission that Oswald fired the fatal shot from behind Kennedy. (Most students of the assassination refuse to buy that because of the Zapruder film and all the other evidence indicating the fatal shot was fired from the front. Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry insisted during a 1979 BBC program about the assassination that "by the direction of the blood and brains... it would have to [have been] fired from the front rather than behind.")

But the House Committee did sharply disagree with the Warren Commission conclusion that Oswald had acted alone: "The Committee believes... that President Kennedy was probably assassinated as a result of a conspiracy."

The Committee said there was no doubt someone was firing from the grassy knoll, meaning there were two or more men involved, a planned conspiracy. It based its conclusion on the evidence already detailed here and, most important of all, on acoustical evidence.

Committee investigators discovered, in Dallas police files, a tape recording of a motorcycle cop's radio that had been jammed in an open position on the fateful day. Shots were clearly heard, maybe four of them. The tape was turned over to the most respected acoustical engineers in the world. After months of analysis, those experts reported that there was a 95-percent or better probability that there had been a fourth shot. Using sophisticated instru-

ments to measure peculiar echo patterns in Dealey Plaza, the scientists reported that the firing position must have been from behind the fence at the top of the knoll—and they pinpointed the gunman's position at just about where the railroad workers had seen puffs of smoke.

There can be little doubt that JFK was killed as the result of a conspiracy. While ruling out the Russians, Cubans, CIA rogues and other groups that had variously been suspected, the Committee said there was a great deal of evidence indicating the possibility that the Mafia was responsible for the assassination, and that Jack Ruby played a role in the killing.

The evidence that the assassination was a Mafia hit is so overwhelming that Robert Blakey, chief counsel to the Committee, went even further than its low-key conclusion. "I am now firmly of the opinion that the Mob did it," he says. "It is a historical truth.... Any effort to explain that assassination has to include the fact of two shooters and the fact that Oswald was killed by Jack Ruby. Those are facts. I have looked at everything else I could find, in addition to those hard facts, and they all point in one direction: Ruby killed Oswald as a result of a desire to silence him. And Oswald... acted in behalf of a desire on the part of elements of the Mob to get the Kennedy administration off their back. It's that simple."

The Warren Commission and its conclusion has its defenders, of course. One of the most outspoken of them is David Belin, who was an assistant counsel to the Commission. Belin maintains that the Commission's investigation was thorough, that it was honest, and that its conclusions cannot be doubted by anyone except "the assassination sensationalists" who are guilty of "misrepresentation, fraudulent omission, and smear...."

"The Warren Commission was right," Belin says. "There is no doubt in my mind that, in the long run of history, truth will prevail.... There never was any question in my mind that the seven Commissioners, as well as all the lawyers working with the Commission, had absolute integrity in seeking the truth. All the evidence shows, and convinces me beyond a reasonable doubt, that Oswald killed Kennedy and he acted alone."

Documents that the Warren Commission suppressed—and that are discussed at great length in a compelling new book, *Contract on America*, by David E. Scheim—leave lit-

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tle doubt that Jack Ruby had strong ties to the Mafia from childhood.

Ruby was born in Chicago. When he was a kid, according to what his childhood friend, boxer Barney Ross, told investigators, Ruby was part of a group of kids who ran errands for the most notorious mobster of his day, Al Capone. As he grew into his teens, Ruby hung around in joints owned by Chicago hoods, part of the Syndicate or the Outfit, as the Mafia is known in that city. He began to make book in several of these joints—which was not possible without the Outfit's approval.

Ruby was arrested a couple of times on minor charges, but by 1937 he got himself his first "job"—working in the Chicago local of the Scrap Iron Handlers Union, which the Outfit was trying to take over. In 1939, the founder and president of the local, Ruby's boss, was shot to death. Ruby was held for a time as a suspect in the murder, according to the Assassinations Committee, but the records have vanished and it is not clear if he was ever charged. Shortly after the killing, the Outfit installed its own man as the new president. Ruby was made second in command.

(There's an important thing to keep in mind about the Chicago Mafia organization. The Outfit was not as insular as Mafia groups in other cities. In Chicago, non-Italian mobsters such as Jake "Greasy Thumb" Guzik, Murray "The Camel" Humphreys, and other Jews, WASPS, Greeks, and Irishmen were key figures in the Outfit. There was nothing unusual about Jack Ruby, a Jew, getting a Mafia union post. Or other jobs.)

Documents released by the Assassinations Committee show Ruby soon got into moonshine-liquor distribution; the Mafia has always made big profits from illegal, untaxed liquor. He began to operate bars, strip joints, and other red-light-district establishments owned by the Mob, and he kept his gambling business going. Police reports from that era also reflect the suspicion that Ruby was involved in the Outfit's heroin distribution.

And then he was picked for more important things. According to testimony before the Kefauver Crime Committee in the 1950s and the McClellan Rackets Committee in the 1960s, the Outfit made a decision in the mid-1940s to take over the rackets in Dallas, which was then a wide-open town. And in discussions with cops they were trying to bribe, the Chicago hoodlums men-

tioned Jack Ruby as one of their men and said he was going to be put in charge of gambling dens, the Kefauver Committee hearings revealed. Other law-enforcement sources told the Kefauver Committee that Jack Ruby was sent down to Dallas in 1947 as "a Syndicate lieutenant who was to serve as a liaison for Chicago mobsters."

The Outfit did take over Dallas criminal activities, and by 1957 the city had become so big in the Mafia hierarchy that it had its own don, Joseph Civello. A man who worked for Civello's front business, a food-importing company, told the FBI that he was certain the firm also imported heroin, and that Jack Ruby was "a frequent visitor and associate of Civello." Civello later admitted he had known Ruby for years, but denied being involved in the narcotics business with him.

Ruby operated a number of clubs and restaurants as a front for what officials believed were his criminal businesses, including narcotics distribution. But his major activity in Dallas appeared to be to keep the city's rackets running smoothly for the Mafia.

Dozens of documents make it clear that Jack Ruby was a major Mafia associate in Dallas. But how does one

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jump to the conclusion that he was involved in a mob plot to murder JFK? Why would the Mafia want Kennedy dead in the first place?

The motives began solidifying a couple of years before the killing. Before Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, the American Mafia ran major gambling casinos in Havana hotels and used Cuba as a transshipment point for heroin coming from Europe. A half dozen major Mafia bosses had pieces of the action, but the overall director was Santos Trafficante, Jr., the Mafia don of Florida. Don Santos was treated ignobly by Premier Fidel—his and other casinos were closed, and he was thrown into a Cuban prison.

As an indication of his stature as a Mafia associate, Jack Ruby was one of several men who visited Trafficante in his prison cell, FBI reports state, apparently to help plan Trafficante's release.

Trafficante was later kicked out of Cuba. From the moment he got back to his Florida base, he began to scheme to depose Castro. He got involved with anti-Castro Cubans who were plotting to invade the island, and he was one of the key figures in the CIA plot to use the Mafia to assassinate Castro. And when the CIA-backed invasion of Cuba came to grief at the Bay of Pigs because President Kennedy had second thoughts about supplying U.S. air cover for the Cuban invasion, Trafficante vowed to put Kennedy in his grave.

It wasn't merely that Kennedy had screwed up the Cuban invasion and begun to make overtures to come to a friendly understanding with Castro: It was that JFK, along with Attorney General Bobby Kennedy, had begun an unprecedented crackdown on the Mafia.

In September 1962, Trafficante met with Jose Aleman, Jr., a wealthy Cuban exile, to discuss a multimillion-dollar business deal. The talk soon turned to the Kennedys, Aleman later told the Assassinations Committee, and Trafficante became very bitter, condemning the government's attempt to put Teamster boss and Mob handmaiden Jimmy Hoffa in prison. Said Trafficante of the President: "Mark my words, this man Kennedy is in trouble and will get what is coming to him."

When Aleman suggested that JFK probably would be reelected, the Don said: "No, Jose, he is going to be hit."

As Aleman later told investigators for the House Assassinations Committee, he didn't feel that Trafficante was guessing about the killing but felt strongly that he knew Kennedy was to be murdered.

At around the same time, September 1962, New Orleans Mafia Don Carlos Marcello was making a similar pronouncement about JFK's impending murder. Marcello was one of the Mafia leaders seriously hurt by the Kennedy drive against organized crime. Only three months after he was appointed attorney general, Bobby Kennedy had Marcello arrested, handcuffed, and summarily flown to Guatemala, in furtherance of a long-standing deportation order that Marcello had successfully stalled in the courts.

Months later, Marcello was secretly flown back to New Orleans in a private plane and began another round of court battles against deportation. Bobby Kennedy promptly had him arrested on fraud, perjury, and illegal reentry charges.

In the same month that Trafficante revealed there were plans to kill John Kennedy, Marcello was holding a meeting in his office with a businessman and occasional private investigator, Edward Becker. Marcello, who had been in a good mood, suddenly became enraged when the Kennedy name was brought up. "Don't worry about that little Bobby son of a bitch," he said. "He's going to be taken care of."

But "they" would not be killing Bobby, Marcello said, because the president would use the Army and the Marines to get "them." But if "they" killed the president instead, Bobby would lose his power. Becker told House Assassinations investigators that Marcello indicated the killer would be an outsider who could not be traced back to the Mafia.

That's where it all stood until a story in the *Dallas Times Herald* on April 23, 1963, gave the itinerary of a proposed trip to Dallas by President Kennedy. A curious thing happened immediately after the article was published: Phone company records show that Jack Ruby's calls to Mafia members and associates across the country increased dramatically; the calls increased even further in October, after the paper reported that the JFK trip had been firmed up; and they remained much higher than usual up to the day before the assassination. Documents also show that Ruby made a number of trips to Miami, New Orleans, Chicago, and New York, where he met with mobsters or their associates.

Immediately after the first announcement, Ruby placed calls to Robert McWillie in Las Vegas. McWillie was a hood who was close to Trafficante and had worked in his Havana casino. At McWillie's request, Ruby sent a handgun to him in Vegas.

Ruby also made many calls to a New Orleans bar owned by Pete Marcello, the

don's brother, and went to New Orleans to confer with Frank Caracci, another top Marcello aide, to whom he placed repeated phone calls. He visited Caracci again after a June report that the Kennedy trip seemed more certain, and made numerous calls to him after that.

Also in June, a number of out-of-state mobsters visited Dallas and met with Ruby in his Carousel Club. During their stay, Ruby placed numerous calls to Marcello people.

So it went through the summer, right up to the assassination, with Ruby spending a great deal of his time on the phone to Mafia men or visiting them in four cities. One of the men he visited was Johnny Roselli, who was the number-two or number-three man in Chicago's Mafia organization, and was the Outfit's ambassador-at-large to mobsters in the rest of the country.

In the mid-1970s, as it began to appear that Congress would create an assassinations committee, Roselli began telling associates and news contacts that Jack Ruby had been involved in the conspiracy to kill JFK. Ruby, he told some newsmen, was "one of our boys"; he told others that when Oswald was picked up for the Kennedy murder, the

Mob was afraid he would crack and disclose information that could lead to them, "so Ruby was ordered to eliminate him." Roselli paid for his loose tongue. A few months after he had testified before a secret session at the Assassinations Committee in 1976, his dismembered body was discovered stuffed in an oil drum floating in Miami's Biscayne Bay. Roselli had last been seen alive boarding a yacht owned by a lieutenant of Don Santos Trafficante.

While Jack Ruby was being kept busy with his phone calls and out-of-state trips, Lee Harvey Oswald was establishing his credentials as a nut in New Orleans. He got himself noticed on a rifle range by making an unnecessary fuss about a minor matter, and he got himself arrested for brawls as a member of a pro-Castro organization at the same time he was trying to join an anti-Castro group.

Although Oswald's activities before the assassination are weird and harder to trace than Ruby's, four points stand out:

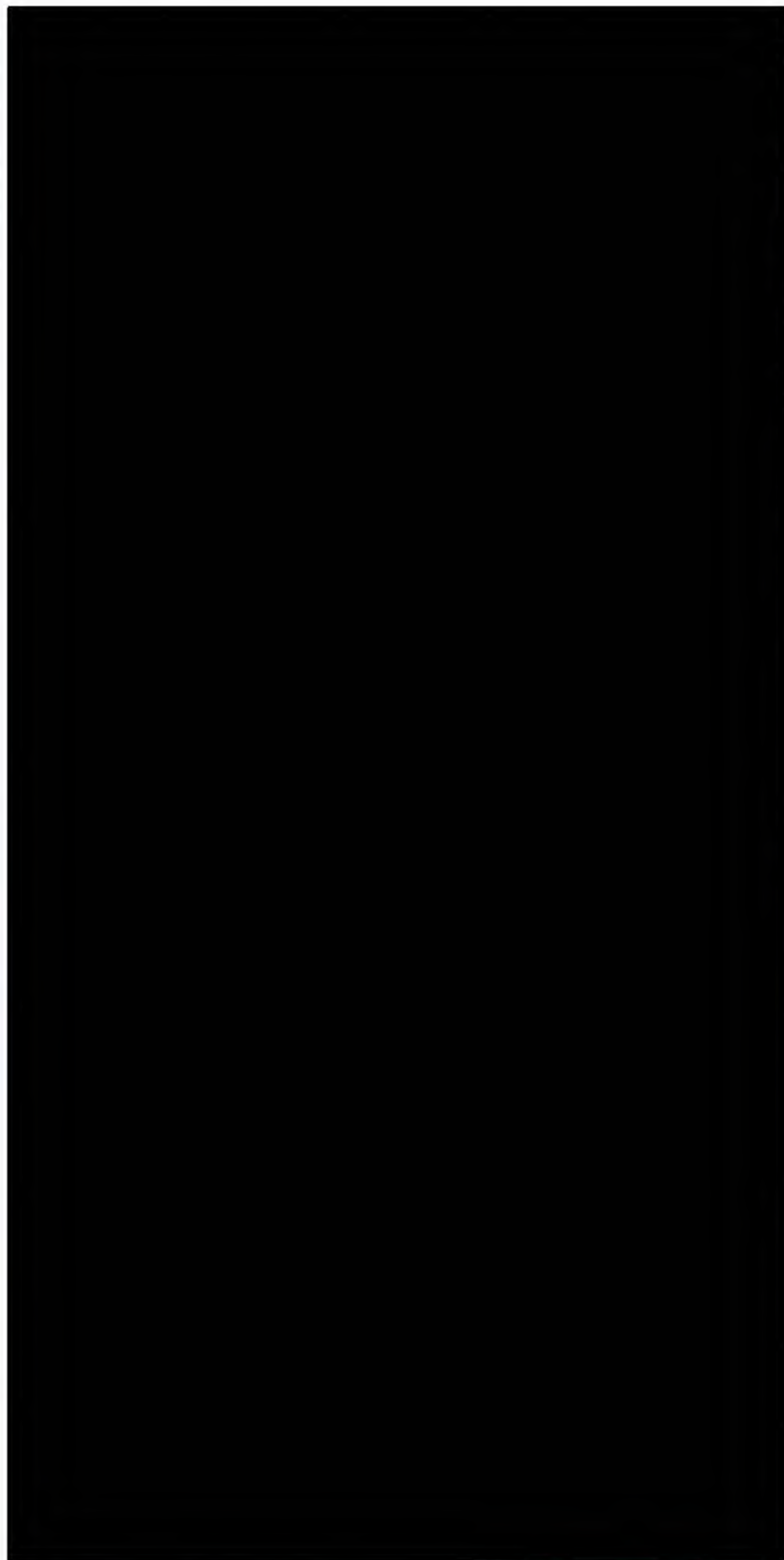
1. When Oswald was arrested in New Orleans for getting into a fight with anti-Castro Cubans, the address on the pro-Castro leaflet he was passing out

was the headquarters of the Cuban Revolutionary Council, an anti-Castro outfit, supported by the CIA and run by Guy Banister, an alcoholic former FBI man who had become a New Orleans police official and then a private eye when he was kicked off the force. Banister told his secretary not to be concerned that Oswald was passing out pro-Castro leaflets because that was just part of a scheme; "Oswald is one of us," he said.

Another man running the Cuban revolutionary Council was David Ferrie. He had first met Oswald in the 1950s, when Oswald was a cadet in the Louisiana Civil Air Patrol squadron commanded by Captain David Ferrie. Ferrie also worked for Carlos Marcello, the New Orleans don, in various major capacities that brought him close to the boss. It was Ferrie, a licensed pilot, who flew the private plane that brought Marcello back to the United States after Bobby Kennedy had deported him. And, many investigators believe, Ferrie was the man directing Oswald in the Kennedy assassination.

2. After his disorderly conduct arrest in New Orleans, Oswald was bailed

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out by Emile Bruneau, a liquor-store owner, state boxing commissioner, and associate of Nofia Pecora, one of the top three people in the Marcello organization. Pecora was one of the *mafiosi* to whom Jack Ruby placed phone calls and may have visited in New Orleans just before the assassination.

3. Before he was bailed out, Oswald was visited by his uncle, Charles "Dutz" Murret, who advised him on how to resolve his legal problems. Murret had long been an important figure in Oswald's life. His father had died when Oswald was a child, and he considered "Uncle Dutz" a surrogate father. Oswald lived with Murret and his wife at various periods through childhood and adolescence, kept in touch with him during the years in the Marines and in Russia, and went to live with the Murrets when he returned with his wife.

Dutz Murret was connected to Don Carlos Marcello.

Murret had been a major gambling figure in New Orleans since the 1940s. He worked within the Marcello organization, according to witnesses and documents. He was known to have been very close to some of Marcello's key aides, and is said to have had the ear of Marcello himself.

4. Several witnesses told FBI agents, Dallas police officers, and the House Assassinations Committee that they saw Ruby and Oswald in a restaurant together the night before Kennedy was murdered. One of the witnesses, a Dallas lawyer, said he heard Ruby call the man he was with "Lee."

There are simply too many coincidences in the Kennedy assassination for them to be coincidences—especially the fact that both Oswald and Ruby had connections to Carlos Marcello, who had said Kennedy was going to be murdered. Everything that has come to light has tipped well beyond coincidence and into the realm of solid circumstantial evidence, which is why Committee counsel Robert Blakey says he'd bet his reputation (and it's a solid one) on his contention that Kennedy was killed by the Mafia.

After a quarter century, all the major figures—including Trafficante and Marcello—are dead. The trail of evidence has been reconstructed as much as possible; it isn't likely that any further revelations will ever surface. Yet what has come to light in 25 years makes it impossible to reach any conclusion other than that the Mafia murdered Kennedy. And got away with it.